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May 4, 2001

DMH LETTER NO.: 01-02

TO: LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM CHIEFS
LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATORS
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
CHAIRPERSONS, LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH BOARDS

SUBJECT: DIRECTION OF MEDI-CAL MENTAL HEALTH
SERVICES

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) is providing the following clarification regarding the direction of specialty mental health services provided by Mental Health Plans (MHPs) as a part of the Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health Services Consolidation program.

The terms of current year contracts between county Mental Health Plans (MHPs) and the Department of Mental Health (Article V- Duties of the Contractor, Section E- Quality Management) include a requirement that the MHP ensure that all covered services delivered by organizational providers, including the MHP, are provided under the direction of a physician; a licensed/registered/waivered psychologist, clinical social worker, or marriage and family therapist; or a registered nurse. MHPs have the flexibility to determine how the direction of service will be accomplished. Examples of service direction include, but are not limited to: (1) being the person directly providing the service; (2) acting as a clinical team leader; (3) direct or functional supervision of service delivery; or (4) approval of client plans. It should be noted that DMH does not require the person providing direction to be physically present at the service site to exercise direction.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact your liaison in the Technical Assistance and Training Unit.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Teri Barthels for:

CAROL HOOD
Deputy Director
Systems of Care

cc: California Mental Health Planning Council
Chief, Technical Assistance and Training